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(a)
 **mdag* } either
 **til* } cooked
 or un-
 cooked.

dōgola-
jā-
dāla-
kón-
chākan-
bōto-kōko-
kū'ara-
pū'lia-

spū'lain-
pi'dga-
gel dim-
ō'rtā-tāl-

*†*chāij*-
kū'ega-
ūd-
ngēbēr-
hēmaj-
eng'ara-
lō'gaj-

†*ō'ropa*-**pā*-*†*kai*-†*kai'ta*-†*chōb*-†*ō'dorma*-**d'buga*-{ *jūmu*-{ *ngā'tya*-{ *bā'taga*-**kāpa*-

(b)

pi'cha-*pa'itla*-*kār'ed*¹**jang'ma*²**jū'ni*-†*pū'ta*-**pār*-**ām*-*†*mā'twin*-*tā'tib*-**eng'ara*-

During the *pā'par-ōdō*- (cool season) and *gē're-bō'do*- (dry months) the six varieties of edible roots mentioned above (vide paragraph 11) are also eaten.

(N.B.—The best fruits, and those which are most abundant, are in season during these months and at the commencement of the rains.)

(It will be understood that those fruits that are unmarked in the above list are eaten in the ordinary way.)

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• [263]
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20. Many fruits they merely suck for the sake of the flavour;³ others are eaten with fine wood-ash,⁴ taken from the hut fires in lieu of sugar, to diminish their extreme acidity,⁵ while a few are cooked,⁶ and the stones of several⁷ are cracked for the sake of their kernels. The favourite fruits are *dōgola*-, *ō'ropa*-, *kón*-, *chōb*-, *jā*-, *pā*-, *kai'ta*-, *kū'ega*-, *chākan*-, *jūmu*-, *ngā'tya*-, *bā'taga*-, *ngēbēr*-, *pū'lia*-, and *pū'lain*-.

21. The fruit of the *ngēbēr*-, *chākan*-, *pū'lia*-, *pū'lain*-, *pa'itla*-, *gel dim*-, *lō'gaj*-, and the seeds of the three above-named varieties of mangrove (i.e., *jūmu*-, *ngā'tya*-, and *bā'taga*-), are freed from their husk or rind and boiled in water until quite soft; when cold they are cut in slices, and left to soak for two days or more in salt or fresh water, after which they are baked in leaves, or again boiled in a *būj*-.

252 22. The Andamanese are, now-a-days at least,⁸ extremely particular over the cooking of their food, and will not eat certain

¹ This is a small yellow fruit, the seed of which, after being sucked, is broken, and the outer portion eaten while the kernel is thrown away.

² This is a small red fruit, about the size of a bean or filbert, containing one stone; it is wrapped in leaves and baked, because they say that if eaten uncooked it would cause them to forget their way in the jungle, as well as entire loss of memory on all points.

³ These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a *.

⁴ Their immunity from scurvy may not improbably be due to the chemical combination of the acid, contained in many of the fruits, with the potash of the burnt wood.

⁵ These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a †.

⁶ These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a §.

⁷ These are marked in the preceding paragraph by a ‡.

⁸ They are very expert in spearing their fish, which they consume in a half-cooked state (Andersen); Symes also writes that "they throw the food on the fire, and devour it half broiled."

515 people. Furthermore, the Onge skin is very soft and more elastic than is usual
[147] in human beings. For us, clothed and with a less resilient skin, a trip through
the thorny Andaman forest means many small, bleeding scratches. Not so for
the naked Onge. - To cover them with clothes would endanger their health.
Nakedness inures them to the sudden changes of temperature so frequent in
[513] Little Andaman and preserves them from catching cold when sleeping, uncovered,
on their rough, unprotected bed of boughs. As with primitives all over the
world, clothes make them miserable and, I may add, very ungainly and dirty.

515 Part of their general negligence with regard to hygiene is their carelessness
about their teeth. They never clean them. They do keep bamboo sticks,
[413] 1 mm thick and 8 cms long, tucked into their hair to be ostensibly used as
toothpicks; but the sticks, to tell the truth, are more of an ornament than a tool.
142 The Onge's teeth are so compact and sound that there is no space between
them for food particles to collect. No caries or decay of any sort are to be
[164] noticed. In a number of skeletons that I dug up from under the beds in communal
huts, the teeth gave evidence of one peculiarity: old people had worn
them down to the root. The Onge habit of using teeth as working instruments,
[209] to prepare fibre for ropes and in many other circumstances - apart from their
permanent chewing on hard foodstuffs - explains this fact.

515 As a consequence of never washing, the natives' hands are sometimes
extremely dirty. The Onge themselves are conscious of this. I shall give an
instance. It so happened that I arrived in Nachugé, on the west coast, toward
226 the end of March, when the sea was teeming with migrating sardines. In Little
Andaman sardines can weigh up to a pound; but a normal catch, obtained
with small hand-nets cast from canoes among shoals of fish imprisoned by the
low tide within the coral reef that surrounds the island, contains specimens of
[264] every dimension. All are eaten as soon as possible. The quantity of fish brought
back to the camps on such occasions puts all inmates to work and induces
everybody to abandon all other occupations for the time being. In the low
tidal waters the men push their canoes from rock to rock, using them as receptacles
for the abundant food so easily collected. In some "pockets" nets prove
unnecessary: the fish is gathered in handfuls and rapidly thrown into the canoes.
The hecatomb ends when the canoes are filled to the gunwales. In no other
part of the world have I seen food made available to primitive people in such
large quantities and with so little effort.

252 Back at the camp, the sardines are "graded" according to size and cooked
immediately. They are not washed or cleaned, the inner organs are eaten together
[263] with the flesh. Men, women and children feverishly take part in the
cooking: the fish is boiled without salt. All the natives then plunge their hands
[264] avidly into the heap of sardines. From time to time the women clean their
515 hands by rubbing them on the *naquinéghé*. Very soon this garment becomes
[231] extremely smelly. Men and children clean their hands in a different way: by
rubbing them on the dogs. On such occasions, everything and everybody
smells of fish for days and days. The first to become clean again are the dogs,
because they hate to be smeared with fish and wash themselves in the sea as
soon as they have a chance.

ing edible matter; furthermore, they don't care to take the trouble as food is generally plentiful. We must also realize that they find salt repulsive. Even honey - so easily kept for many months - is disposed of, if possible, on the very same day it is collected. Incredible quantities of this or other food may be consumed for days and nights on end until everything disappears. Very few of the islanders care to vary their meat diet with an occasional diet of vegetables in order to disintoxicate the system; yet nourishing yams and other roots grow wild and plentiful. They are so rich in carbohydrates that I preferred them to potatoes and rice. I may add that the Onge, on my request, brought me yams and roots that they were glad to barter with rice, tea and sugar - soon declared by their wise men to possess medicinal properties. [251] [263] [264] [262] [137] [123]

The Onge's stomach, intestines and general physiological equilibrium suffer from lack of salt and such bad nutritional habits as those described. They damage the human body, together with unrestrained sexual activity. [147]

One highly unhygienic custom of the Onge is the use, all over Little Andaman, of peculiar sucking-sticks. These pass from mouth to mouth during the frequent meat or honey orgies indulged in by the natives. [264] [412]

When boiling pork or turtle, a quantity of liquid fat floats on the surface of the broth. Though the Onge despise the broth, they don't like to waste the fat. So they devised an efficient solution: they suck the fat up by means of a wad of absorbent matter obtained by chewing the end of a fibrous stick selected among many species of trees in the forest. The end of the stick is chewed along a section of 5 cms, the remaining part - about 25 cms long and 2 cms thick - is used as a handle to prevent the fingers from burning. [262]

In every Onge camp sucking-sticks are permanently in evidence owing to the inmates' frequent ingestion of liquid fat or honey. A second version of the sucking-stick consists in a narrow, cotton-like strip, up to 80 cms long, with only a small part of the original wood remaining. This serves as a handle for dipping the stick into a wooden barrel full of honey. In both instances the same tool passes for hours from mouth to mouth: from older people to greedy children, anxious to suck the coveted delicacy off the stick that has been dipped into the pot. The rapid spreading of epidemics, which often occur in the Andamans, is certainly encouraged by the use of these sucking-sticks. [262] [64] I found no reference to this practice in books on the Andaman Islands.

Everything they eat, particularly meat, the Onge consider as either remedial or harmful. They are therefore chary of accepting proffered food if it is unknown to them. When I brought 30 Onge to Port Blair to introduce them to Dr. RAJENDRA PRASAD, President of the Indian Republic, they were troublesome about food. In Port Blair it was not as easy as in Little Andaman to procure whole pigs; sometimes only pieces were available. The Andamanese Forest Department was quickly informed of the difficulty and kindly supplied the desired animals. In moments of shortage I tried to give the Onge cooked lamb, goat, chicken and pigeons; they resolutely refused them as unhealthy. Birds are never eaten by the Onge, who consider them shelters for human souls. [262] [123] [775] [725]

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754 *naquinēghē* exposes the former owner to harm. Ill-disposed persons could use it for black magic practices. I collected specimens of this garment, all of them, however, brand-new—for the above-mentioned reason. To avoid trouble to the owner, nobody is allowed to touch the *naquinēghē*, which is worn in front of the vulva. To touch it is a deadly offence. Aside from the *naquinēghē*, Andaman colonists attribute the natives' sterility to their abhorrence of salt. Another opinion would have it that the lack of salt transforms human saliva into poison: the Jarawas, by spitting on their arrows render them poisonous. The absurdity of this belief is so evident that it requires no confutation. The Onge refuse to eat salt because they consider it unhealthy, or, to say the least, disgusting.

III. Illnesses and Onge Curative Methods

164 Few illnesses affect the Onge, but they succumb to those few with surprising speed. Often they become seriously ill for mysterious reasons and in spite of their robust appearance. Smallpox, tuberculosis and poliomyelitis are unknown in Little Andaman, although they sometimes strike in the nearby Nicobars. Measles broke out on the island on more than one occasion, killing off all the inhabitants of several communal huts, which I later found deserted and in ruins. With regard to syphilis, the Indian Census of 1931 quotes an old remark of PORTMAN's concerning a few individuals considered by him as infected. This was later denied.

[752] Onge women are more resistant to illness than men. Wounds heal promptly in both sexes, without the aid of remedies. A few of the older men, however, had suppurating sores on their legs, slow to disappear even when disinfected and treated by me with European medicines. No similar sores were found on women. On the other hand, women suffer more than men from ringworm, mainly in the umbilical region. Nothing is done to rid them of it because the discomfort is slight. I suggested an Indian cure made with the leaves of the neem tree, or *Melia azedarach*, very common in Southern Asia [123] where it is considered sacred. I imported the plant to Little Andaman, but the Onge displayed no interest in it. I found a single instance of leucoderma, in a woman with whitish spots on her hands and lips. I could get no reliable information about the incidence of cancer, but it appears to be rare on the island. No baldness is to be seen in Little Andaman, and I found few traces of [142] greying hair, as the Onge die young. A transversal bregmatic furrow is noticeable in all individuals, male and female, as a consequence of carrying loads hung [482] from their heads by a strip of bark. The Onge start doing this in childhood. An artificial, unintentional deformation of the skull is the result of that uncomfortable habit.

751 For hygienic reasons the Little Andaman aborigines paint their bodies with
302 refined clay and ochre of various shades, mainly reddish. This gives the women
[386] occasion to embellish the bodies of their husbands with an endless variety of geometrical designs. Every year I found changes in their patterns, and I

THE UNITY OF THE NEGRITOS

Queensland and (as the Cape Bedford type) elsewhere. Oars, 171
method of fixing the booms and float - all are similar throughout 501
the area, including the Andamans.

Even game, once caught, is treated and distributed similarly by 171
these peoples, from the Andamans to Oceania. Cooking is done 252
without salt, in earth ovens (whether or not fire or red-hot stones 224
are used) very different from those of Africa and America. The 263
Semang and Aetà of today know how to make fire by friction, as 171
do the peoples of New Guinea, Australia and Polynesia; the Tas- 372
mans also have the knowledge to do so, but prefer to carry burning
logs with them on their journeys, like the Andamanese. In certain
parts of New Guinea and perhaps in some of the Pacific islands (as
in the Andamans) the art of fire-making was unknown or possibly
forgotten until recent times; it is said that the Papuans of the Bay
of Astralobius knew nothing of the art until the middle of the nine-
teenth century. But the only sure information comes from the
Andamans, where, whether through ignorance or loss of know-
ledge, the art of fire-making is unknown and fire is always carried
everywhere.

Among the objects typical of the Andamans and found also 171
among the Semang, the Aetà, and other Oceanic peoples are the 412
digging stick and the crude hatchet. The former, used for gathering
edible roots and tubers, is merely a pointed stick, but every family
possesses one. The hatchet is slightly more elaborate, having both
handle and blade, and like the digging stick, occurs always in vir-
tually the same form.¹ Objects woven from vegetable fibres are [28]
also very similar in appearance - often very durable and sometimes
pleasing by any standards. In some places woven breast-plates are [714]
used in warfare, but here the Jarawas differ, using single sheets of [84]
bark.

These are but a few of the many examples which one can find of 171
this striking similarity between these widely separated peoples.
And alongside cultural similarities there exist others, anthropo- 14
logical and physical, which cannot be overlooked. Physically the

¹ This is simply a cutting tool fixed into a natural elbow in a suitable branch. The blade is fixed into the wood near the elbow, and the branch is cut off, so as to leave a short handle. The whole thing is reminiscent of a swan's head on a long neck, and is easily turned into a crude plane or adze by revolving the blade in the haft through a right angle.

THE ANDAMAN ISLANDERS

325 islanders, in the absence of any means of working it, have not fully realized.

3 IGNORANCE OF FIRE

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194 The islanders' present ignorance of fire-making may possibly be the result of cultural decline, but this is not certain. In the presence of the considerable additional evidence in favour of the antiquity of the Andamanese culture it is, however, more likely that it is genuine ignorance, persisting in a pre-lithic people.

4 ABSENCE OF SALT

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263 Although there can be no proof, it can be reasonably postulated that very primitive Man had no salt, and that in the Andamans this ignorance has persisted over thousands of years, owing to strict isolation. It is unlikely that the use of salt would have been completely lost, had it ever been introduced.

5 PRIMITIVE METHODS OF COOKING

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192 Apart from the accidental and very recent introduction of petrol-drum cooking, the Andamanese use only the most primitive form of earth oven. This method of cooking was certainly known in the Palaeolithic era; at the entrance to the well-known Barma Grande cave near Mentone I have myself seen in the basal layers a number of stones bearing the marks of fire, too numerous merely to have formed some sort of hearth, and clearly not used to support cooking-pots, as Palaeolithic Man had none which would have withstood heat. The form of earth oven still used throughout the Andamans is undoubtedly of extreme antiquity.

6 FOOD VESSELS

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192 The people of the Andamans still use for honey hollowed-out logs similar to those seen in Palaeolithic wall paintings, which also depict baskets very like those still in use throughout the archipelago. The art of basket-making can be traced back at least to the later Palaeolithic era.

7 USE OF POTTERY

323
192 As with the other Negrito peoples, pottery was unknown in the earliest culture of the Andamans. Its appearance seems from the evidence of the